AN ACTOR’S PROCESS

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by

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This thesis is dedicated to first, to my wife, Sarah, and my family.

To the Kent State University School of Theatre & Dance’s Acting Faculty; Terri Kent, Mark Monday, Chuck Richie, Jonathan Swoboda, and Eric van Baars.

And to my undergraduate theatre studies mentor, Jonathan Chambers, who inspired me to pursue acting as a profession.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

In the Spring of 2005 I graduated from Bowling Green State University, where I earned two Bachelor of Arts degrees, one in Theatre and the other in Telecommunications. My undergraduate theatre studies provided me with an eclectic foundation for my acting. I studied and implemented the acting theories of Constantin Stanislavski, Lee Strasburg, Anne Bogart, Jacques Lecoq, Sanford Meisner, and many others. This training gave a base for my acting but it did not supply me with an effective way to approach a role or the ability to communicate my process. Due to my desire to be able to articulate myself as an actor and to gain a more thorough understanding of my craft I decided to pursue a Master of Fine Arts in Acting.

Upon entering Kent State’s MFA program I still relied upon the training I learned from my undergraduate studies. As an undergraduate I was very briefly exposed to the Michael Chekhov Acting Technique. One of the components of the Chekhov Technique that I identified with was the use of character archetypes. Archetypes are beings which we can easily identify with (the hero, the villain, the damsel, and others) due to an actor’s embodiment of their essence. I discovered that this embodiment results in a complete transformation and would immediately begin to inform all areas of my acting. I utilized this approach in my first thesis role, Bill Sykes in Oliver!.

As my graduate training progressed, I was able to learn more about the Michael Chekhov Acting Technique. Areas of this technique which had an immediate impact on my process as an actor were Quality of Action, Qualities of Movement, the Four
Brothers, and Psychological Gesture. In the Michael Chekhov technique, *psychological gesture* begins in the rehearsal process as an outward display of a character’s emotional state. This gesture is then internalized later in the rehearsal process to create a more honest and informed performance. I utilized *psychological gesture* and other aspects of the technique in my second thesis role, Cinesias in *Lysistrata*.

After being exposed and implementing the Chekhov’s technique for a year, I integrated everything that I had learned as a MFA actor for my final thesis role, Vershinin in *Three Sisters*.

In this document, I will discuss the process I undertook to create each of the three thesis roles. Through this analysis, I will evaluate how my process as an actor has become more refined and limitless due to the techniques I now possess.
CHAPTER II
SYKES

During the summer months between my first and second years of graduate school I decided to challenge myself and actively pursue performance opportunities outside of Kent State University. In choosing to leave the university setting, I forced myself to abandon a comfortable environment and thrust myself into a more aggressive performance venue. This required me to create new relationships with artistic and production directors with just my audition and to compete for roles against union performers in stranger new environment. Through researching the professional theatre’s summer seasons in the greater Cleveland area I found Cain Park, a regional theatre in Cleveland Heights, which had planned to produce the Lionel Bart musical *Oliver!*. This musical was slated for performance from June 21 through July 8 and was to be directed by Fred Sternfeld. This production immediately sparked my interest because it would offer me the opportunity to perform in a classic musical with iconic characters from Charles Dickens’ *Oliver Twist* and I would be able to further establish myself in the professional Cleveland theatre scene by working with Fred Sternfeld, one of the area’s best musical theatre directors. Performing in this production would also allow me to grow as a performer. I was cast in the role of Bill Sykes, the villain of the musical, who kidnaps Oliver and murders the heroine, the protector of Oliver and lover of Sykes, Nancy.

After thoroughly reading the script I became immediately aware of the biggest challenge I was about to encounter with this character. Lionel Bart wrote Bill Sykes as a
basic character archetype of the villain. Nearly all of Sykes’ lines were written as threats or verbal assaults, thus creating an underdeveloped one dimensional character of “the bad guy.” Throughout the rehearsals of *Oliver!* I sought to portray Sykes more than just a villain, creating a complex human being who could embody a full range of atmospheres, qualities, and emotions. I succeeded in my performance of Sykes by focusing on the following three areas. First, I drew from Charles Dickens’ original conception of the character in the novel *Oliver Twist*, then I created distinct physical traits for Sykes using the theories of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Kristin Linklater, and Michael Chekhov, and finally I developed meaningful relationships offstage with Patty Lohr and George Roth, the actors cast as Nancy and Fagin.

**Imaginary Body**

Lionel Bart’s libretto for *Oliver!* fails to divulge any in-depth details on the character of Bill Sykes. I found it imperative to turn to the source material, Charles Dickens’s *Oliver Twist*, to aid me in further development for my interpretation of Bill Sykes. (Dickens spells the character’s surname with an “i”, Bill Sikes, while Lionel Bart spells it with a “y”, Bill Sykes. For the purpose of this analysis I will refer to Bart’s interpretation of the name unless directly quoting the novel.) When Sykes is first introduced in the novel Dickens utilizes a detailed description of his appearance to create a vivid image for the readers,

…a stoutly built fellow of about five-and-thirty, in a black velveteen coat, very solid drab breeches, lace-up half boots, and grey cotton stockings, which enclosed a very bulky pair of legs, with large swelling calves…He
had a brown hat on his head and a dirty belcher handkerchief round his neck…with a beard of three days’ growth: and two scowling eyes; one of which, displayed various parti-coloured symptoms of having been recently damaged by a blow.¹

This description aided me greatly for creating the *imaginary body* of the character from Michael Chekhov’s approach to the work. I imagined Sykes as a strong man, who barely fit into his mismatched clothing and didn’t care much for his physical appearance; a hulking brute who would use his build and appearance to intimidate others. I then translated this image into my posture and movements for the character.

I would stand to my full height (6 feet tall) with my chest barreled outwards in order to create the illusion that I was larger and stronger than my current build. This exaggeration was furthered through the aid of costuming and by wearing garments that were slightly too small. I also integrated Sykes’s large build into my walk for the character. For Sykes’s walk I would move through the playing space with a sense of great weight, force, and direction. I used Rudolf Laban’s movement efforts system to navigate the space; I used “press,” creating the illusion that whenever Sykes moved he did so with great power and purpose. This work successfully transformed my normal build and walk into one that was powerful and radiated at all times.

I furthered my transformation by utilizing Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s theory of acting. Lessing believed an actor, “can generate internal passions by first engaging in external activity.”² In other words, an actor can generate internal emotion though external action. For example, Lessing believed that if an actor clenches their fist or grinds their teeth their body would generate the emotion of anger. Since I wanted to
clearly separate myself from the character of Sykes I used this technique seconds before making an entrance. In the wings offstage, I would contort my body into a Laban gesture of “wring.” That way the imaginary persona of Sykes would immediately generate and encompass my body. By embracing this posture onstage Sykes’s persona would continue until I actively stepped out of the character offstage. Lessing’s technique enabled me to become the violent Bill Sykes without hurting myself or my fellow cast mates.

**Creating the Voice**

Dickens also comments on the sound of Sykes’ voice. Sykes “spoke in the very harshest key of a very harsh voice…and growled more fiercely than before.”¹ I interpreted Dickens’ text into a voice that came across as guttural, gravelly, and very low in tone, creating a very deep and frightening voice when juxtaposed with the other characters with which Sykes shared the stage. Since this voice was an extreme character choice I found it imperative to uncover a healthy way to perform it throughout the month long run. Using Kristin Linklater’s technique, Journey to the Inner Center, I was able to locate my center for creating sound. For every performance I would implement Linklater’s technique behind the scenic unit for the Three Cripples Pub just minutes before my first entrance. In a relaxed state with my knees slightly bent and my legs a hips width apart, I would “quiver” my breath directly engaging my diaphragm. I would then touch upon the sound “huh” and this allowed me to locate the inner center for each performance, placing the voice in my oral cavity and face, avoiding sound getting caught in the throat, or potentially harming my vocal folds.
Creating Relationships: Patty Lohr

In Bart’s script it is inferred through other characters dialogue that Sykes and Nancy are husband and wife, however in Dickens novel this is never presented. Dickens comments on their relationship by having the two characters live together in the same flat and they care for each other for primal companionship. Due to the close bond between the characters of Sykes and Nancy I found it valuable to establish a relationship with the actress who portrayed his female counterpart. Prior to the start of rehearsals I began an online correspondence with Patty Lohr, the actress who played Nancy. By the time rehearsals began I was able to create a positive working relationship with Patty immediately. Through our discussions, we decided that our character’s objectives revolved around the need for survival, but that Bill and Nancy genuinely love each other as well. With the relationship clarified Patty and I pursued ways to further their loving relationship onstage. Since we were greatly limited by Bart’s dialogue, consisting primarily of arguments and bickering, we had to develop new ways for conveying their loving relationship. In the scene immediately following Sykes’s song “My Name” Patty and I interpreted Sykes’s desire for Nancy to kidnap Oliver as a coy game of seduction. Since we were limited by the dialogue in this scene I utilized the Michael Chekhov technique to create an atmosphere of passion to show Sykes’ feelings towards Nancy. This approach allowed me to create the impression that these two characters have a history together and that they truly care for one another.

In Dickens’s text and in Bart’s script it is never revealed if Sykes has committed murder. However, he does brag about roughing people up in alleys in his introductory
song “My Name”: “Some toff slumming with his valet, bumped into me in the alley. Now his eyes’ll never tally, he’d never heard of my name!” Additionally, he boasts of having a physique that is capable of killing: “Biceps like an iron girder, fit for doing of a murder.” I interpreted this song as a way Sykes would intimidate people, by telling them stories of terrible things he has been accused of committing. I decided to reinforce this image by having Sykes take credit for crimes he did not commit, giving the impression that he was a dangerous man and that people should live in fear of “his name.” Sykes’s intimidation tactics are also carried over into his relationship with Nancy. Instead of purely relying on verbal attacks, Sykes uses physical violence to influence Nancy’s decisions. The combat that was required between these characters included: backhanding Nancy, choking, throwing her to the ground, and her violent murder. I found that the offstage relationship I had established with Patty Lohr early in the rehearsal process played a valuable role, as she felt comfortable to trust me fully with the combat, which was especially important in staging her violent murder.

Sykes’s need for survival in both the novel and the musical drives him to murder Nancy in order to protect himself from being captured by the police. When Sykes confronts Nancy, he does not intend to kill her. Instead, he would rather change her mind about returning Oliver though verbal attacks and physical abuse. As their argument escalates he becomes enraged and out of control. Dickens comments on Sykes anger and its destructive nature: “He’s a rough man, and thinks nothing of blood when his own is up.” I accomplished this by allowing myself to live in an atmosphere of anger. Blinded by his rage, Sykes murders Nancy. After her murder, Sykes’s realization of the crime he has just committed destroys him. This is the most vulnerable moment for Sykes in the
show. To create this vulnerable moment I altered my atmosphere to sadness. By changing Sykes’ emotional states I was able to create polarity with my acting choices and I also created a moment in which the audience sympathized with Sykes. Through the murder of Nancy, Sykes destroys the only person he has ever loved and the guilt of this crime leaves him with no other choice than to destroy himself. After her death Sykes is backed into a corner and threatens to murder Oliver at gun point in front of the mob that has gathered at Nancy’s body. This shift was accomplished through embracing the fear. I drew a parallel to this moment with the 1931 Universal film, *Frankenstein*. A similar scene features the monster trapped in a windmill surrounded by a mob after murdering a young girl. Similar to the monster, if Sykes is not destroyed he will continue on his destructive path. Both the monster and Sykes share similar emotions at this point in their stories, fear of punishment for the crimes they committed. They are both terrified by the mobs of people and feel remorse for the murders they have committed. I integrated the iconic images of the monster terrified on the windmill into my performance for Sykes and when I delivered the line, “Stand back or I’ll kill the boy!” I interpreted the line as plea for help with a quality of desperation, “desperately.” Although this choice doesn’t excuse Sykes’s terrible deeds, I believe it effectively shows that Sykes is more man than just a monster.

**Creating Relationships: George Roth**

Along with the relationship I was able to create with Patty Lohr I was also able create a close bond with actor George Roth. He was cast in the role of Fagin and due to his past professional experience and thoughtful insights I turned to him as mentor in this
production. Due to the lack of development of Sykes in Bart’s script George Roth and I would discuss our characters and their history together from Dickens’ novel endlessly. We both decided that Sykes was the first “Artful Dodger,” which means he held that rank when he was the age of Jack Dawkins, the current “Dodger.” We decided that Sykes did not agree with Fagin’s method for accumulating income, relying purely on pickpocketing, and chose to leave the gang to become a housebreaker, or a burglar. This change in Sykes’ persona illustrates how he no longer wants to leave his life to fate but by breaking into houses he is controlling his income and his future. This character work laid the foundation for a great onstage performing relationship. After performing our scenes he and I would immediately “spy back” on our work to discuss moments that needed further clarification and to check if we were effectively embodying our chosen action and qualities. By establishing a collaborative working environment, we were able to fully trust each other and our work together grew exponentially due to the risks we were able to take.

**Conclusion**

Despite the vague character development for Bill Sykes in Bart’s script I believe I was able to succeed in my performance. Through a careful analysis of Dickens’ classic novel I was able to uncover details of the character that were omitted in the musical. I was then able to directly implement these details into my interpretation of the character, creating a fully realized human being that also fulfilled the archetype of “the villain”. By utilizing Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Kristin Linlater, and Michael Chekhov’s performance theories I succeed in creating a character that was an extreme opposite to my
own personality. Also, through the bonds I created with Patty Lohr and George Roth we were able to create relationships where the characters actually cared for each other and we were able to take physical risks. Due to these key aspects to my performance as Bill Sykes I succeeded in my original goal of creating a fully realized human being and not just a one dimensional character.
CHAPTER III
CINNESIAS

Upon completing Oliver! (Cain Park) and Sweet Charity (Porthouse Theatre) in Summer of 2007, I returned to Kent State and began preparing for the upcoming department auditions for Lysistrata and Urinetown. While I was preparing for these auditions, I noticed a strong parallel between the style of characterizations that were present in both works. Both Lysistrata and Urinetown embraced such basic character archetypes as the rebel (Lysistrata and Bobby Strong), the soldier (Lycon and Lockstock), the innocent child (Peace and Hope) and many more. During the call backs for these productions my main goal was to fully embody the character’s fundamental archetype for Lockstock and Cladwell in Urinetown, the essence of the soldier and the villain, and for the Magistrate in Lysistrata, the essence of the politician. After the cast list for both productions were posted, much to my surprise I discovered that I was not cast in any of the roles which I had been called back for. Instead, I was cast in the role of Cinnesias in Lysistrata. With this news I was slightly taken aback, because I never read for the role in call backs. Wanting clarification on how I received the role I approached Professor van Baars, the director for Lysistrata. I was informed by Professor van Baars that I received the role of Cinnesias because he knew I could meet the physical and performance demands for the character. Eric further elaborated on this topic by remarking Cinnesias’ role in this production of Lysistrata was to serve as a “faux leading man.” I realized that with the role of Cinnesias I would now be able to push myself to new limits as a performer, fully embodying the archetype of “the hero.”
For this production of *Lysistrata* Professor van Baars focused on three areas: the comedic aspects of the production would take priority, the political message would be of the next most importance, and historical accuracy would be the least important aspect. With these three areas of focus in mind I returned to Vincent Dowling’s adaptation of *Lysistrata* to clarify Cinessias’ archetype. As discussed earlier, Professor van Baars classified Cinessias as a “leading man,” but I found this archetype to be elusive and not fully realized in Dowling’s adaptation. During the scene between Cinessias and his wife Myrrhine, Cinessias’ major scene in the play, we witness him in pursuit of only one objective--to have sex with his wife. I found this single journey to be filled with passion and agony. Seeing as his manhood was on the line, Cinessias represents the archetype of “the hero.” He must have sex with his wife in order to end the women’s strike. By achieving his objective, Cinessias will be a heralded a hero because he has enabled all of the men of Athens and Sparta to have sex with their wives. I succeeded in my performance of Cinessias by altering my appearance through the means of physical and vocal manipulation, by utilizing physical and psychological gesture to communicate Cinessias’ internal desires through the theories of Francois Delsarte and Michael Chekhov, and by overcoming performance obstacles during the rehearsal process and the run of the show.

**The Playwright, Director, & Costume Designer’s Vision**

During the second read through of the script, Vincent Dowling gave us his insights on how the performances of his adaptation should be realized. Dowling believes that “all tragedies are comedies that are just not fully realized.” I took this to mean that
tragedies and comedies share a common story of life and death stakes for the characters, but a tragedy typically ends on a depressing note whereas comedy ends with an uplifting or even humorous one. For his adaptation Dowling stressed that as performers we must not lose the humanity of our characters despite the farcical or even absurd elements they may posses, such as wearing a three foot phallus. Taking Professor van Baars first area of focus for the production to heart, I decided to fully invest in the comedy of Cinnesias. This meant I needed to embrace the archetype of “the hero” and push the limits of the character to the extreme. I was first sent on this path by costume designer, MFA Design student Jen Biehl, and her early renderings of my character. She depicted Cinnesias a soldier of the Athenian army garbed in cupcake tin and pot holder armor, a mullet and wearing a men’s athletic shirt under his armor. With these eccentric items Jen dubbed Cinnesias as the “white trash warrior.” With her renderings in mind and the nickname she gave Cinnesias my imagination began to race. I could automatically envision Cinnesias with the facial hair of a professional wrestler, with pointed side burns and a horseshoe moustache, and the demeanor of an overly confident/arrogant hero. After having my choice for facial hair approved by Eric, I began to alter my physical appearance to capture the face and body of Cinnesias.

**Imaginary Body**

As we worked on updating Dowling’s adaptation to integrate contemporary references, because the script was originally written in 1975, I began to experiment with different contemporary icons for Cinnesias’ *imaginary body*. I found it imperative to discover the way Cinnesias held himself as a man. Using my imagination I pictured
Cinnesias in similar poses that professional wrestlers might use. The iconic stances and
gestures of Hulk Hogan, the Macho Man Randy Savage, and the Ultimate Warrior raced
through my mind. Another iconic “macho man” that inspired me was Gaston from
Disney’s Beauty and the Beast. Similar to Cinnesias, Gaston can be interpreted as a
warped archetype of “the hero” because he views Belle as a bride to gain. Both Gaston
and Cinnesias seek to dominate the women they are pursing and when they consistently
fail in their pursuits their pride/egos take the biggest hit. Like professional wrestlers,
Gaston uses his body to show off how masculine he is. Both of these became the source
for my imaginary body: I physically manipulated my stance so I was always at my full
height, I barreled out my chest so I appeared muscular, and I utilized my entire body for
all of my gestures.

**Physical Transformation**

In order to fully achieve the body of Cinnesias I had to physically transform
myself into a person whose ego and appearance play a vital role in their everyday life.
Therefore I put myself on an immediate diet and exercise routine. My goal was to get
myself into the best physical shape I could by the time the production opened. This was
accomplished by running a mile and biking for seven miles everyday, eating healthy, and
working out at the university recreation center twice a week. When tech week
approached I had lost over 20 pounds and 5 inches off my waist. Through this routine I
was able to transform myself into the Cinnesias I imagined in my minds-eye. As I was
altering my appearance for the role, I also changed how I moved in the playing space. I
accomplished this by moving from my character’s center. Since Cinnesias’ objective was
to have sex with his wife I placed my center in the middle of my pelvis. This was further reinforced through the aide of a three foot phallus in the same area. I imagined my center to be a shiny dense ball emanating pink light pulling myself forward at all times. This resulted in all of my crosses to be derived from my pelvis and a sense of urgency with my movements at all times. Due to leading from this area my stance was altered because my pelvis was always sticking out, keeping me slightly off balance, and the gait of my walk became larger (approximately 3 to 4 feet in length). By fully embracing the imaginary body of Clinessias I was able to physically transform myself into a tortured soldier of ancient Greece.

**Discovering Clinessias’ Voice**

After discovering the physical embodiment of Clinessias I began to solidify how his voice should sound. Using Michael Chekhov’s *imaginary body* exercise, along with professional wrestlers and Gaston as templates, I began my voice work. Early in the rehearsal process I imagined Clinessias with a deep, full, and resonating voice. I found this vocal quality too limiting and it did not allow me to fully express the vocal composition of the character as a whole. Although I found the deep/robust sound suitable, I needed to discover a voice with more dynamics present. By layering different voices, through imagination and experimentation, on top of the physical quality of Clinessias, I stumbled upon a new sound for the character. I imagined Clinessias’ vocal quality sounding similar to Will Ferrell’s impression of Robert Goulet from the weekly television series, *Saturday Night Live*. Ferrell’s interpretation of Goulet is one that openly mocks the famous musical theatre/lounge lizard performer. This deep but
melodic voice inspired me to select a plethora of new qualities for Cinnesias’ dialogue. This was a suitable match for Cinnesias. Although he is veiling his angst behind a faux cool demeanor and steady deep voice, he unveils different vocal changes as he becomes more frustrated and exasperated at the thought of not being able to have sex. His vocal quality changes to one that is higher and more shrill in pitch. Due to altering the imaginary voice of Cinnesias, I was no longer limited to qualities of harsh, “harshly, or stern, “sternly”. I could now freely such qualities as woo, “wooingly,” coy, “coyly,” and many more. Through these changes in Cinnesias’ voice, I was able to clearly establish the macho demeanor of “the hero” and juxtapose this archetype with that of the frustrating unsatisfied lover.

Utilizing Delsarte in Performance

Once I fully embodied the physical and vocal qualities of Cinnesias I sought to further push the limits of my character in the area of gesture. In observing rehearsals of Lysistrata, in the E. Turner Sump theatre, I encountered a new problem; from the back of the house the performers looked minuscule because of the massive size of the set. Two giant statues, one of the Greek goddess Aphrodite and one of Athena, located just inside of the proscenium arch dwarfed the performers. Aware of this scenic issue I decided to fully embody all of Cinnesias’ emotions outwardly through physical gestures and to make them as large as possible in the performing space. Utilizing a more presentational style of performing, I based my gesture work on Francois Delsarte. Championing gestures in acting, Delsarte states, “gesture has been given to man to reveal what speech is powerless to express.” He argues that a gesture makes the biggest impact on acting and must be
“kept in sight long enough to allow an enjoyment of the view.” 9 This aspect to Delsarte’s theory of gesture aided me in understanding that words are meaningless unless the gesture of a performer fully manifests itself strongly. Delsarte condemns speech as “inferior to gesture because it corresponds to the phenomena of mind; gesture is the agent of the heart, it is the persuasive agent.”10 In order to fully articulate the angst and passion of Cinnesias I created vivid outward gestures. These gestures were physical embodiments of the actions and qualities I was performing and I would maintain them as prolonged poses. While performing Cinnesias, I would continue to hold a particular gesture until my body gave way to a new physical impulse and I would continue to hold this new gesture until another manifested itself. I performed this continuous cycle of gestures though my entire scene with Myrrhine.

The Michael Chekhov Acting Technique

To fully realize these gestures I was performing I relied upon my work with the Michael Chekhov acting technique and psychological gesture. In the prior semester we had begun exploring Michael Chekhov’s acting technique with the new member of the acting faculty, Professor Mark Monday. Through Chekhov’s technique I isolated my objective, my actions, my qualities, my atmospheres, and my obstacles in my scene with Myrrhine. My objective was to have sex with my wife and I sought to accomplish this through selecting the actions “to seduce” and “to demand.” For the majority of the scene these actions never altered. However, my qualities of action changed continuously due to reactions of my scene partner. My qualities would vary from demanding, “demandingly,” woeful, “woefully,” humble, “humbly,” passionate, “passionately,” to
many more. Also due to my desire to have sex with my wife, the dominating atmosphere for Cinnesias was one of passion. My atmosphere was constantly challenged due to the physical limits of my three foot phallus which presented an obstacle that limited my movement and hindered me from accomplishing my objective, to have sex with my wife. However, the most useful element of Chekhov’s technique has been through my physical embodiment of psychological gesture.

**Psychological Gesture**

Chekhov’s *psychological gesture* is a tool that performers utilize through the rehearsal process to aid them in fully embodying their character’s objective.

*Psychological gestures* manifest themselves within the actor,

…stirring from his Will and Feelings. Some of them appear at once with the utmost clarity and urge him to produce them immediately, while others are not so easily grasped, but loom in the distance, promising, intriguing, stimulate. They accumulate, change, improve, influence on another. They merge in original compositions, flowing organically from each other…¹¹

Through my personal rehearsal process I quickly discovered that the gestures I was utilizing for Cinnesias could easily manifest themselves outwards and could become a pivotal aspect to my performance. Due to my interpretation of Cinnesias, as a man who is larger than life, it would be more than acceptable to fully exhibit my *psychological gestures* outwards. This would coincide with my acceptance of Delsarte’s theory of gesture by making gesture more important than the spoken word and truthfully relating my character’s feelings through his movements. Some of Chekhov’s gestures that I fully
realized in my performance included; to strike, to open, to push, to pull, to wring, and to point. I used Chekhov’s *psychological gesture* “to strike” in my performance of Cinnesias. Whenever I directly referred to myself through lines, whether in the first of third person, or through blocking I would physically strike myself or the air. I could fully realize this in my scene with Myrrhine when I proclaimed, “I am her husband, Cinnesias, son of penisias.” and when I respond to Myrrhine’s taunts, “You love me? Then why refuse to lie with me my sweet Myrrhine?” Through both of these lines I am vocally striking back, but I also allowed the *psychological gesture* to manifest outwards as I would strike my cupcake armor breast plate with my fist. Throughout my performance I used the *psychological gesture* of “to reach out, to touch but never grasping.” Although this gesture was not originally conceived by Chekhov, but was derived out of the works of Rudolph Steiner we utilized this gesture with Professor Monday in class and it became my primary gesture as I yearned for my wife. This gesture manifested itself throughout my scene in its entirety. This gesture emerged in my pleading dialogue and interactions with Myrrhine throughout our scene outside of the Citadel. The scene began with “Myrrhine, my darling. Myrrhine, what are you saying come down to me quick.” It continued with me on my knees ignoring their son and saying “Don’t mind that little boy. Kiss daddy instead.” A third example is when Cinnesias is in bed on the Citadel’s steps and entices her with: “Surely there’s nothing else. Come, my treasure.” Through the embodiment of Chekhov’s *psychological gesture* and by embracing Delsarte’s theory of gesture I was able to fully embody and exaggerate the gestures for comedic effect for the character of Cinnesias. Although the physical, vocal, and gestures for this character were
performed to their most extreme state, I was able to keep Cinnesias grounded in his humanity.

**Performance Obstacle**

Through the rehearsal process and the production run of *Lysistrata* I encountered one area of difficulty; being able to fully trust my primary scene partner Myrrhine. The difficulty in working with this performer stemmed from her lack of commitment to the character, her lines, and her blocking. I was able to overcome these problems by creating additional actions and qualities in my scored script. This way I was always prepared for whatever occurred onstage. As a young professional actor, I found this experience to be extremely rewarding. It taught me that as a performer I can control only what I can control. By being always prepared and always in the moment onstage, I could always continue my performance no matter what was occurring around me. Reflecting back on this process, I am excited to see myself becoming a performer who is able to trust his impulses, his scored script, and is able to always recover.

**Conclusion**

Although Cinnesias is a character that only appears for one scene towards the middle of the second act, I believe I was able to successfully create a character who was grounded within his humanity while still coming across as an exaggerated cartoon. Through my understanding of the archetype of “the hero” and by modeling Cinnesias after such outrageous characters as professional wrestlers, Gaston, and Ferrell’s interpretation of Robert Goulet I was able to physically and vocally transform myself into
a being that was completely different from anything I have portrayed before. I was able
to fully realize my transition into a man’s man by utilizing Delsarte’s theory of gesture
and through my embodiment of Chekhov’s *psychological gestures*. Due to embracing
these aspects in my performance, I was able to effectively fill the E. Turner Stump theatre
with physical movements that showcased Cinnesias in times of great pride and angst.
Although I encountered some difficulties in this production, I believe I was still able to
push the archetype of “the hero” to the limits of Cinnesias.
After completing Cinnesias in the Fall of 2008 I was cast in both of the Spring semester productions, the musical Wonderful Town and Bertolt Brecht’s The Caucasian Chalk Circle. Wonderful Town was directed by Professor Monday and I played the role of Robert Baker, a frustrated New York editor who falls in love with “the heroine” Ruth Sherwood. Wonderful Town was a fantastic experience to be involved in because this production allowed me to utilize the Michael Chekhov technique which I learned from Professor Monday in class while we were rehearsing Wonderful Town. Wonderful Town provided me with a more process based experience, allowing me to grow tremendously with my technique. Brecht’s Caucasian Chalk Circle was part of the Kent State University’s School of Theatre and Dance’s visiting director series. The professional director that was brought in for this production was Mathew Earnest. Working with Mathew proved to be a very unique process because Mathew’s direction was based heavily in the philosophies of Brecht and were implemented throughout the rehearsal process.

Following Wonderful Town and The Caucasian Chalk Circle I was employed by Cleveland State University’s Summer Stages as a member of their acting company for their second season. I found this summer position to be extremely rewarding due to its close proximity to my permanent residence with my wife and the 12 Equity points I earned for the three month season. As a member of Summer Stages I was cast as Mr. Bergen in Dark of the Moon and Antonio in Two Gentlemen of Verona. Dark of the
Moon was directed by Everett Quinton, one of the founders of the Ridiculous Theatrical Company, and Two Gentlemen of Verona was directed by Dee Dee Sandt. Summer Stages was a Summer Stock theatrical venue where I found myself immersed in the hustle and bustle of trying to mount three productions in less than a month’s time. However, I found this experience to be one of ease and relaxation because I was able to simply do what I was hired for, to act. Due to my positive experiences with the past school year I felt empowered as an actor. For the first time I was able to fully articulate myself as a performer because of the exercises and terminology of the Michael Chekhov technique.

Upon the summer’s completion I began preparing for our department’s upcoming auditions; the musical A New Brain and the Russian classic Three Sisters. I was cast in Three Sisters as Veshin. Three Sisters was a production I was greatly looking forward to because all of the graduate students were cast in it together and this production would also serve as a unique Chekhovian learning experience. Not only was the play written by Anton Chekhov but the Michael Chekhov Acting Technique would also be integrated. Under the direction of Professor Monday my techniques as an actor were able to soar to new heights and my level of comfort on stage reached a new level of lightness and ease. I succeeded in my performance of Veshin by embracing Michael Chekhov’s psychological gesture, imaginary body/center, and atmosphere. This allowed me to become more confident and proficient in my abilities as a performer which allowed me to alter my scripted score nightly. Finally, I was able to overcome performance obstacles.
**Psychological Gesture**

During the first couple of weeks of rehearsal Professor Monday intensively taught the Michael Chekhov Acting Technique for the cast members who were not exposed to it. This was very helpful because it allowed the graduate students to demonstrate and help the other members of the cast. One of the first areas we worked on was assigning psychological gestures (to strike, to embrace, to open, to close, to tear, to lift, to push, to pull, to wring and to throw) to lines from the play with archetypal movements.

*Psychological gesture* starts in the early rehearsal process as an outward expression of the characters inner feelings or emotional state. The key for *psychological gesture* is that, “Each movement must be as broad as possible, so that your whole body and the space surrounding you will be used to the fullest degree.” By using my entire body with these gestures I was not limiting myself in my performance. This freed me from getting stuck in my head and opened me to using my whole body. This resulted in my performance being freer because I was using my entire body to show Vershinin’s emotions.

*Psychological gestures* are expressed externally throughout the early rehearsal process and are later internalized. I was able to use *psychological gesture* very effectively when I was first learning the Chekhov Technique while I was performing the role of Cinnesias in *Lysistrata*. For Cinnesias, I utilized *psychological gestures* in an external form and did not internalize them. This was effective for this role because the character was larger than life and it was appropriate to show Cinnesias’s psychological states externally. However, for Vershinin it was not appropriate for the character or for the style of the show to physically manipulate my body into different psychological archetypal poses. In
rehearsal, one of the lines I worked on was, “I feel an urge to live, to do something wild.” For this line I assigned the archetypal action “to take” and by using my entire body (starting from an open position to a closed one) I was able to pull my body inward. This illuminated the psychological gesture of “to pull.” This gesture demonstrated Vershinin’s seduction of Masha and after completing the gesture several times I was able to assign an acting quality of “burningly” to it to further refine the movement. By adding qualities to psychological gestures, my movements become more vibrant and full of life, thus allowing me to gain a very thorough insight into the character and I was able fully express the psychological states of him. Michael Chekhov notes, “Even during this first period of joyful discovering of Psychological Gestures, the actor will find that he has already acquired a fairly thorough knowledge about the whole play and his part.” I discovered that Vershinin was a “taker” from other characters in the play. I found this slightly alarming because Vershinin appears to be a “giver,” because he engages the other characters in philosophical musings and debates. Through his speeches it appears Vershinin is trying to motivate, elevate, or even inspire the other characters. He does this to a point, but what I discovered is that he is actually wanting or “pulling” the other characters into him. Due to my positive discoveries with psychological gesture I continued my work outside of rehearsal to investigate the rest of the text and to assign gestures for the entire script. These gestures can be found in the appendix for this document.
**Imaginary Body and Center**

Several weeks into the rehearsal process, Professor Monday devoted a large portion of one evening for *imaginary body* and *center* work. *Imaginary body* and *center* work are techniques that I have used in all of my characterizations, but now with my training in the Chekhov Technique I can finally define the process. In *Lessons for the Professional Actor*, Chekhov comments on the power of *imaginary body*, “If you imagine it, you will see that you are so far from your own psychology, and that you have already plunged into another imaginary being, and you will have a different psychology, and will speak and move differently.”

I find Chekhov’s observations on this aspect of the technique to be one hundred percent accurate. I have always found that all of the characters that I perform on stage to be nothing like me physically or mentally. Through the use of Chekhov’s *imaginary body* I was able to picture Vershinin in my mind’s eye. I envisioned Vershinin to be six foot three inches tall, with broad shoulders and a 34 inch waist. I imagined the physical presence of Vershinin to be one of great command and that he could take control of a room just by having his physical presence cross the threshold. I also found Vershinin’s face to be chiseled, like it had the appearance of a man who has seen the world but it did not exhibit any signs of his age, which Professor Monday and I decided to be 37. I also discovered that due to the amount of stress in his life with his suicidal wife the character had begun to gray. After envisioning this new being in my mind’s eye I began to ask Vershinin leading questions on how he moved in different sections of the show. If he embodied the *archetype* of “the soldier” his movements were completed with a molding quality. If he was “the visionary” he would use flowing gestures. If he was “the lover” or “the Don Juan” he would use radiation. In
my imagination Vershinin would used multiple *archetypes* throughout the show and for each one he moved and sounded drastically different.

Upon envisioning Vershinin in my imagination I began to move around the rehearsal hall watching him walk in front of me. After some time observing him move, sit, and interact with other people I took on the imaginary body of Vershinin. This moment was extremely important for my process because this was the first time in rehearsal I became the character. My body was altered drastically and I could physically feel a difference in the way I walked, motioned, or even sat. I also discovered that the center for Vershinin was placed in the center of his broad chest. This *center*, no matter which archetype Vershinin was embodying, dictated from where he moved at all times. This center was literally pulling the character through space and resulted in Vershinin moving with a commanding presence. I also found Vershinin speaking with a much lower voice than my own, taking his time when he spoke, and he thoroughly enjoyed the sound of words. As Vershinin, I would over articulate each syllable of a word. Through these acute observations of Vershinin’s *imaginary body* I was able to create a character that was drastically different than my own. Some of my Art of Theatre students informed me that they didn’t even recognize me when I first came on the stage and that it took them some time to finally realize that is was actually their teacher. I have found that Chekhov’s *imaginary body* and *center* work has been an invaluable tool and one that I will continue to use though my career.
Atmosphere

A final component of the Michael Chekhov Acting Technique that proved to be an extremely vital tool was the use of atmosphere. Through the use of atmosphere I was able to imagine the mood of a scene surrounding me, live in that mood, and have my actions and qualities organically come from it. Chekhov states,

The Atmosphere, like the well-developed imagination, stirs and awakens Feelings within us that are the essence of art. One cannot live in the Atmosphere of the scene or the whole play without immediately reacting to it with one’s Feelings. The Feelings, in this case, arise organically of themselves, without being forced or squeezed out of our soul.\textsuperscript{21}

The danger I first encountered when I was implementing atmosphere in my acting was becoming too absorbed in the mood of a scene and simply playing sadness, anger, fear, or any other mood I may imagine. If an actor simply plays an atmosphere, “[They] lose [their] action and flounder in the mood, and begin to lie more…we have to imagine the atmosphere around us filled with certain things. That saves us from squeezing the feelings.”\textsuperscript{22} By simply imagining the atmosphere around me I was able to create a mood that radiated to my fellow cast mates and to the audience. For example, when I first enter in Act 1 I imagined an atmosphere of fear because this was the first time Vershinin was to meet the Sergeyevna sisters. This atmosphere was quickly altered once I introduced myself and was changed to an atmosphere of joy. By allowing myself to be open to my fellow actors’ atmospheres my action and qualities quickly altered and ultimately resulted in my mood giving way to theirs. In previous class work and productions this aspect of the Chekhov Technique always proved to be elusive. I found myself indulging in the
atmosphere instead of actively living in it and having it inform my feelings. However, with this production I feel I have gathered a sound understanding of how to imagine and live in an atmosphere without becoming totally engrossed in just playing a mood. I believe this ultimately resulted in an organic performance that was truly in the moment.

**Changing the Score**

Due to the extended rehearsal period we had for this production, we rehearsed for approximately two months instead of the typical four to six week period, I found myself beginning to second guess a lot of the discoveries and acting decisions that I made. I found this incredibly unsettling because I felt that the work that I accomplished up to this point had been some of the most clear and grounded acting that I have ever done. This resulted in me returning to my scored script and I began to make alterations to the work I previously settled upon. As tech week continued I found that my fears were completely unfounded. The work that I accomplished up to this point was suitable for that specific time when I scored the script. However, like all theatre, the show continued to evolve and take on a new life as we progressed though tech week and through all of the performances. My understanding of the character using the Michael Chekhov Acting Technique allowed me to make decisions on my feet as I acted. I found that I could adjust my actions and qualities while I was in the middle of a scene and I could still reach my objective. An example of this was in Act 4 when I would say goodbye to Masha. Instead of simply trying to duplicate the acting I did the night before I allowed myself to be in the fully invested in the scene and not try to simply duplicate my work from the previous night. This enabled me to alter my *archetype* and *qualities* to what I was
receiving from Masha, played by Nicole Perrone. If I was using the *archetype* of “the soldier”, I would utilize *qualities* that were firm, “firmly” and if I was embodying the *archetype* of “the lover,” I would utilize *qualities* that were despairing, “despairingly.” Both of these acting choices worked in this moment and did not change the story we were telling.

Looking back on this scene I found the changes in my character’s *archetype* and *qualities* that I used were also grounded in the response I was receiving from the audience. If the audience was invested in the show and their energy was actively radiating back to me as I performed, I discovered that I would embody “the lover/despairingly” option and if the audience was passive “the soldier/firmly” option manifested. I always strived to perform the show I rehearsed with my fellow cast members and take on “the lover/despairingly” option. However, simply performing a show that is constantly changing around you can cause many pitfalls. If the show continued to evolve through rehearsals and performances and I did not change with it I would ultimately become an actor who is lost and never truly in the moment. By allowing myself to simply be in the moment and not try to analyze the decisions I was making I was able to create a performance that was filled with freedom and lightness and ease.

**Performance Obstacles**

Through the tech week and the performances of *Three Sisters* I encountered some areas of difficulty. The coat I wore as Vershinin was too small and limited many of the movements that I rehearsed. I was able to work with the costume shop and have the coat
altered so I was able to regain some of the movement. Unfortunately, even with the alterations, my movements were still limited while I performed. I excelled at overcoming this obstacle by simply remaining invested in the show and incorporating Vershinin’s tight coat into my character. I changed the *imaginary body* of Vershinin to be one that wore clothing that was not tailored to fit him comfortably.

The second performance obstacle I encountered was the underscoring in the show. The underscoring for our production was not integrated into rehearsals until tech week and at times was distracting. For example, in Act 2 when I was seducing Masha the scene was underscored to heighten the *atmosphere*. The underscoring began quietly as the characters were engaging in playfully banter and continued to get louder as the scene progressed and the characters became more lustful for each other. When the underscoring for this scene was first integrated it was very distracting and would occasionally take me out of the play because of how loud it became. However, after working with the underscoring though tech week I was able to simply void out the music and focus on the scene. Once I became more comfortable with the underscoring I believe it was a helpful tool for our production. The underscoring was able to successfully heighten the *atmosphere* and bring a more informed story to the audience.

**Conclusion**

Playing Vershinin allowed me to grow to new heights and allowed me to become a more confident performer. By utilizing the Michael Chekhov Acting Technique I was able, for the first time, to accurately articulate my process as an actor. This production provided me with an opportunity to study *psychological gesture* and it enabled me to
identify all of the inner feelings of the character. Through this in-depth analysis I was able to gain a more profound understanding of the character as a whole. Through studying *imaginary body* and *center*, I was able to create a character that looked, sounded, and moved drastically different than myself. Integrating Michael Chekhov’s *atmosphere* techniques into my performance I was able to fully live in the world of the play and radiate the moods of my character. By fully committing to the Chekhov technique, I was able to break many personal barriers and finally have a full sense of freedom as I performed. Due to my understanding of the role and new found sense of freedom as an actor I was able to alter my score nightly, so my performance was always in the moment.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

Due to my studies as a graduate student I have been able to gain a more thorough understanding of my process as an actor and the Michael Chekhov Acting Technique. While performing my first thesis role, Bill Sykes, I discovered that my archetype work served as an efficient starting point for creating a fully embodied character. Also, due to the positive friendships I was able to create, with Patty Lohr and George Roth, we were able to create a positive working environment that allowed us to openly discuss and try new things while in rehearsals and when we were performing. In my second thesis role, Cinnesias, I was able to advance my craft as an actor by embracing aspects of Delsarte and Michael Chekhov’s techniques. Through my work with psychological gesture I was able to push the limits of my performance and create a character that was out of this world but was still grounded in his humanity. Finally, in playing Vershinin, I was able to experience full freedom as an actor. This was due to understanding and being able to implement aspects of the Michael Chekhov technique in my work. The Chekhov technique has allowed me to grow as an actor and has supplied me with the tools to perform any role I may be encounter. I discovered that through Archetype, Psychological Gesture, Imaginary Body/Center, Atmosphere, Qualities of Movement, and Qualities of Action I now have the tools to meticulously create complex characters while in rehearsals but nevertheless, have full freedom while performing.

With this new sense of freedom, I have regained my confidence as an actor. Before I started my MFA I was an actor who utilized a lot of different techniques and not
a lot of specificity. However, by using the Michael Chekhov Acting Technique I have
gained an in-depth understanding on how to create a role, I now have the abilities to
articulate my process to fellow actors and directors, and I now feel comfortable that I can
overcome any problems I may encounter while performing. I look to the future with
great excitement and any new challenges that may come my way.
NOTES


3 Dickens, 93.


5 Ibid.

6 Dickens, 129.

7 Bart, 91.


10 Ibid., 43.

11 Ibid., 61.


13 Ibid., 66.

14 Ibid., 64.

15 Ibid., 66.

16 Ibid., 68.


May 22, 2007

- Set: looming over Oliver (the outside world closing in on him)
- Costumes: grays, muted colors
- Director’s Concept: the search for love. Everyone in the show is searching for love/companionship in some way.

Thoughts: Bill Sykes is longing for identity/companionship. This is based out of his career in crime away from Fagin and his relationship with Nancy. Although he is very physically and mentally abusive he only wishes to be loved/needed in return.

- No dog in the show (Bullseye), which is a good thing. It would have been a new experience to interact with a dog in a show, but it also relieves me of the stress of a dog that was only going to be used in 2 scenes.
- After the read through we worked on creating relationships between the characters at the Three Cripples pub. For this exercise I was Bill Sykes. Interesting discovery: I took on an observing role at the bar and I didn’t get drunk. I was more interested in sizing up people for hitting them up after they leave the bar and observing Nancy’s manipulation of upscale clients.

- Approached Fred on changing my facial hair from a full beard to mutton chops.

May 23, 2007

Character Development Talk with Fred

- Need to establish a set of rules Sykes lives by. Can do this, this, and this…but not this and why.
May 23 continued

- Sykes pursues safety more than love.
- Sykes has higher ambitions with his life of crime. This is why he left Fagin when he was 14. He didn’t want to be limited to just being a pickpocket.

Music: need to find a rougher quality to my voice while singing “My Name” and “Fine Life Reprise”. I need to sing the song as if I was conversing, as opposed to making it sing-songy. Once the songs are blocked I feel I will be able to break the sing-songy quality of delivery and actually make connections with fellow characters. I believe this will result in a more conversational quality. Pay attention to staying on pitch, in particular “Wif me jemmey” section.

Importance of Sykes’s name: committed aggressive crimes but has never murdered. Sykes will take credit for murders he did not commit. This further establishes his name in the criminal underworld and in the eyes of those I intimidate.

May 24, 2007

Talked with Patty (Nancy) and Anne (Bet) on character relationships. Discovered that Sykes uses the Three Cripples pub as a source of income and this is where he originally met Nancy. Their relationship started as a transaction and evolved into a romantic connection. Sykes is viewed as pimp for Nancy and Bet. At London Bridge, Bet supplied Sykes with the information on Nancy’s plan to return Oliver. When I confront her it starts as an attempt to seduce her but my actions quickly change to rage which results in her ultimate murder. By killing Nancy I fully become the monster I was trying to subdue. Through becoming this monster I must be destroyed.
May 25, 2007

Today we blocked “My Name”. Fred gave me the blocking before we started rehearsal so we could jump right into the song. This resulted in me “being thrown to the wolves” because this was the first time I was to ever attempt this song on its feet. I couldn’t get through the song because of all the new elements being thrown at me (remembering the blocking, lyrics, and props). I must be more prepared for future rehearsals with Fred because I don’t know if he will attempt something like this again. I came to the song with tasks I wanted to accomplish (rob rich guy, sex it up with Nancy, revel in story with man in alley). I was able to successfully change the song from sing-song to a more ugly conversational quality.

May 29, 2007

Worked “Fine Life Reprise” scene. Things went very slow due to the stage combat and the over working of moments. Thankfully Fred opened the scene to George, Patty, and I for our input and were allowed to act on our impulses to further shape the scene. Very quickly the scene changed in its entirety and became more fluid. Fred went on to block the song “Fine Life Reprise” and the cumbersome process reemerged. He once again allowed us to act on our impulses and the song worked itself out. He commented after the blocking session that he should have just let George, Patty, and I block the scene/song out because our impulses and ideas worked out great. Fred commented that I need to explore the full dynamics of my voice and how I use distance to intimidate people. I should not limit myself by yelling. I also found myself using the Laban effort of Press through my movements. However, I do not want to limit my self with my actions so I will further explore different options.
Ma 30, 2007

Blocked Nancy’s murder tonight and I went out of my way to make this a comfortable experience for Patty. If moments came up that were uncomfortable or made Patty worried, we reworked that specific section. One of the difficult aspects to the murder was Patty’s lack of experience in the area of combat and her reluctance to fully commit. As this rehearsal continued Patty became more comfortable and the fight became more fluid.

May 31, 2007

Rehearsed the kidnapping of Oliver with the entire cast. We reworked my entrance into the scene so I came in as the scene was in progress. I would then wind my way through the crowd taking on the animal quality of a snake. Experimented with the use of the Laban effort of Float. For this scene I interpreted Sykes dialogue as his attempt to hype up the crowd. This was effective. We also worked on the murder again tonight. Tonight we were able to go over the fight on the spiked out London Bridge. Due to not having the scenic unit we were greatly limited and we will not have it until tech week. We will have to wait and see if adjustments need to be made. Continued positive attitude with Patty to make her feel comfortable.

June 1, 2007

Today worked with the dialect coach. I need to be conscious of articulating my constants. We ran through “My Name” tonight, however there was no accompanist. This proved to be extremely frustrating because it was almost impossible to lock into the tempo. However, I uncovered new moments of intimidation with bar patrons tonight. I found that as long as I am in the moment I have the opportunity to intimidate anyone on
June 1 continued

stage. This is an effective tool for me because the cast is also aware now that I am changing the people I approach every time. Forcing them to be committed and in the moment as well. Fred wants me to find more moments in stillness…will do so next time around.

Worked the last scene London Bridge and the murders tonight with the entire ensemble. The murder proved to be extremely successful. The cast was shocked and disturbed by its intensity, this is good. I am excited to see how the murder progress and what reaction it will have on the audience.

June 5, 2007

Need to work with Patty to make the backhand in the “My Name” scene more fluid. Fred has been trying to erase some of the sincere moments Patty and I have created. This is frustrating because I feel Fred is attempting to turn Sykes back into a one dimensional character. I know Sykes is the villain but I can not let Fred obliterate the moments that make him a real person.

After rehearsal I had a costume fitting and it was a DISASTER!!! I could tell the designer did not read the script or the book. Instead of taking the time to create a distinct look for Sykes she simply had me try on what fitted. The colors she had selected do not coincide with idea that Sykes is a man of the shadows and lives as a being of the night. Next rehearsal I will approach Fred about my concerns.

June 7, 2007

Very frustrating rehearsal tonight because the Music Director wanted us to rechoreograph the fight so it would fit with the underscore. Thankfully, after Fred talked with her she
June 7 continued

agreed to cut some of the music so it would work with the fight. We will need to work with the accompaniment from this point forward so the murder can become tighter and more fluid.

June 9, 2007

Great strides were made with tonight’s rehearsal and in particular “My Name”. I implemented new moments with some of the bar patrons and the throwing of Kris and my telling the story of the guy in the alley to Rob worked fantastic. I now feel comfortable enough with the song to allow myself to fully invest in the moment instead of self editing the whole time.

June 10, 2007

We ran Act 2 tonight and I feel as if I took a step backwards in my development. “My Name” seemed to fall apart tonight…this was caused by coming in a measure early. Even though I was able to correct this error it threw me for the rest of the song. Lately I have been ending “My Name” with a growl quality. I need to find a healthy way of performing this…Linklater’s “Inner Center” may help.

June 11, 2007

I learned a valuable lesson from Kent’s production of Hair and the importance of breaking the ice early and starting friendships/dialogue with everyone. This aided in creating an ensemble that really gelled together and worked effectively onstage and off. Due to this past experience I am now happy that I went out of my way to create a positive friendship with Patty and the rest of the cast. I thought it was vital to create a “happy Bob” because I was concerned that the cast, primarily the kids, would be intimidated or
June 11 continued

scared of me outside of performing. By creating 2 distinctly different personalities (Bob Russell and Bill Sykes) the cast and most importantly Patty always felt comfortable around me. Due to these positive developments I am proud of the connections and the work I have been able to create thus far.

June 12, 2007

Very comforting rehearsal tonight due to making great strides with my personal comfort level. Since I went out of my way to create 2 separate personalities for this production I was able to develop an internal switch for becoming Sykes. Borrowing from Lessing’s acting technique and the Lang’s theory of emotion I am able to simple take on the physical posture of Sykes and I instantly become the character. Thankfully I was able to have myself removed from all of the scene changes. This needed to happen for 2 reasons. One, I believe the audience should see me for the smallest amount of time before I become Sykes in Act 2 and I need as much time as possible to complete Sykes’s makeup.

June 13, 2007

Tonight I felt as if I had marbles in my mouth. I need to spend more time before a run through on vocal warm ups. I also need to go on vocal rest due to the amount of yelling I have to do throughout the show. Although I have been implementing Linklater’s “Inner Center” and I am not doing any harm to my throat or vocal cords but my voice has become tired. I also need to go back and clarify the moments with Nancy. By clarifying these moments the relationship with Sykes and Nance will become a tangible reality and more clear for the audience.
June 14, 2007

Vocal rest during the day today aided greatly with restoring my voice. The move to the Evans Theatre at Cain Park has been a positive one. Now that the playing space is fully open and I can fully invest in Sykes’s physicality and dominating presence. I am looking forward to integrating the costumes in the next few days and what new discoveries I will make.

June 17, 2007

Run through went great tonight…however I feel limited due my costume. I requested my coat and vest to be a little snug to aid in the illusion that Sykes is physically larger than life. Although this completes the look for Sykes I have now limited myself with the stage combat. I will have to find a way to complete the combat even though the reach for my backhands has been limited a little.

June 20, 2007

For the second night in a row the gun that is supposed to kill me has not fired. This is terrifying because we preview tomorrow…I have spoken to Fred about possible solutions and pray it will all work out. Tonight, I improvised a new ending and was dragged out by the cops along with Dodger. Even though this worked Fred told me not to do this again, because he believes Sykes must die for good to conquer evil. Lets pray I get shot tomorrow.

June 21, 2007: PREVIEW NIGHT

The gun worked tonight…HUZZAH!!! The run went great and can’t wait to open tomorrow.
June 22, 2007: OPENING NIGHT

Another great show and… the gun FIRED AGAIN!!! We are now on a roll and everything’s clicking. Although I feel confident with the show now I am looking forward to the growth we will make in a week or so.
September 1, 2007

Today is literally the morning after the cast lists were posted. Much to my surprise I have been cast in a role I was never called back for, so this morning’s read through will be an experiment because I haven’t had any time to look over the character. Vincent Dowling, the playwright, was in attendance. His comments are as follows:

- Tragedy is comedy its just not fully realized
- Don’t lose the humanity of our characters
  - Every character deals with life and death stakes: time of war

Eric van Baars gave us his insights into the production:

- 1. is the comedy, 2. is the political message, & 3. is the historical accuracy
- *Lysistrata* is not just a show about make love not war. Instead, by not having sex women are stopping the war machine and by seizing the treasury they are cutting off funds to the war.

September 2, 2007

Today we engaged in another read through of the script and further roles were assigned (the ambassadors, the president, etc.). No new developments…I am still experimenting with the character. I need to further explore different tactics for getting Myrrhine into bed (seducing, demanding, flirting, etc.).
September 3, 2007

We blocked the prologue today in B042. I had to take on a Russian dialect immediately and I wasn’t expecting this. Was somewhat unsuccessful, but after some insight from Eric and I transitioned to a more mock Arnold voice with a lot more “AHHHS” and over articulation of words. This can prove to be effective, but I need to further explore new possibilities. Also Arnold’s dialect isn’t Russian, its Austrian. Prologue relationship with Nicole has started off strong. We decided to make the Russians a tired couple and completely lack of emotion. Everything is matter of fact due to the difficult and hard lifestyle. This should have a cold atmosphere. Continue work on exaggerated characterization.

September 12, 2007

We reworked the prologue today. I need to continue work on exaggerating my mock Arnold voice. I am beginning to slip into a Liverpool dialect. The cast has been shifted due to Elizabeth’s departure. Nicole has taken on the role of Lysistrata and I now have a new Myrrhine. Tonight we worked in the Stump theatre and from this point forward we will be in the performing space. Even though the scenic elements are still sparse I am excited for the opportunity to work on a fully functional/actor friendly set. The element of water, for the fountain, will become a future obstacle down the line. Thankfully the set will be painted with a gritty material. In my thesis committee meeting this afternoon Eric commented that this role will offer me the challenge of playing “the leading man.” Possible archetypes: “the hero” or “the solider”. Basic ideas: dashing man and ego fueled – Gaston from Beauty and the Beast. My wife, Myrrhine, is merely a trophy wife
September 12 continued

and a tool to exhaust my passions. I would only want children that are boys – so they can become warriors as well and carry on the family name.

September 13, 2007

Today I began to experiment with Cinnesias’ voice. I have decided that it is a mix between Gaston and Will Ferrell’s interpretation of Robert Goulet. We blocked the beginning of Act 2 through the rap section. I discovered Cinnesias walks with a slight bounce in his step – when I move across the stage rapidly it takes on the form of a light skip. During the rap section I see Cinnesias as being out of place– thus trying to look cool, but he doesn’t know how to. I found myself utilizing the most awkward adlibs between the raps as possible – I will have to be on my toes every night during the section to be sure I am fully in the moment. As I hump the statue I found Cinnesias is a very aggressive humper and also likes to slap – of course this is all for comedic effect. I have made contact with Myrrhine today and will be meeting with her tomorrow to discuss the work Nicole and I have already established between the characters.

September 17, 2007

We blocked my big scene today. As the rehearsal progressed I became more frustrated – due to Myrrhine’s lack of knowledge on our scene and Eric having to spell everything out for her repeatedly. Eric wants me to become bigger with my characterization and to tighten up my cues. I feel this will be 100% possibly when I am totally off book. The use of a rehearsal phallus helped incredibly today. I am so pleased to already have the opportunity to start using this prop. One it will help with the comedy/blocking of the scene and two the cast will get used to me wearing it. Eric commented that he wants
September 17 continued

Chris Richards or I to record the voice over at the top of the show.

September 18, 2007

We went back and cleaned up the bits in my scene today. We ran Act 1 today and everything went great from my side of things. I received my show phallus today and it works great – I used it at the end of the first act. The bits are now endless because of this prop. Tonight was a very difficult rehearsal process because I was suffering from a migraine. I was able to finally get some pain killers, but they arrived an hour and a half after my migraine started. The pain resulted in me having cold sweats but I managed to get through my scene and I succeeded in not letting anyone know I was in pain – except for Eric and the SM. Working with Myrrhine still proves to be a problem. We had a great talk a few days ago but she has still not made any progress with her character.

September 19, 2007

We ran Act 1 today. I didn’t receive any no notes. I will need to continue to play with my characterization of Ivan, the Russian.

September 20, 2007

Ran my scene tonight and I was successful in my goal for being 100% off book. I need to solidify my changes in qualities. I need to clarify when I am dashing, woefully, encouragingly, or demandingly. I can not be yelling out of anguish for the entire scene – by clarifying my qualities this will remedy itself. Frustrations with Myrrhine continued tonight. She is still not off book or even attempting to create a character.
September 21, 2007

Act 1 went well – I need to further clarify my guttural stops as the Russian. Act 2 continues to be a disappointment. Myrrhine is still dropping the ball – I can barely hear her onstage and she is standing less than 5 feet away from me. Our bits need to be clean and precise. Hopefully the scene will take a turn for the better when we are called for the TBA rehearsal. I need to further investigate more qualities.

September 23, 2007

The reworking of our scene went great today. Myrrhine is actually investing in the scene and she is making a turn for the better. We reworked bits of business and created new moments. I will rerun the scene again on my own before tomorrow’s rehearsal so I can get it into my body. Overall today was a better experience. Changes in my qualities are coming across effectively.

September 24, 2007

I need to find more opportunities to play the prologue out to the audience – currently I am too profile – this is an easy fix. My vocal quality is still coming across as too gruff as the Russian and I need to utilize a more flowing quality – rounder and fuller. Chuck Richie wants me to alter the voice from Arnold to more Russian – so think Tevye but not Jewish.

My scene went well again today – our comedic bits are tightening up. I need to watch Nicole’s toes as I run towards her because I accidentally stepped on then. Tonight I had the chance to work with my armor and my boxers. These extra elements are helping me sooooooo much. Thank heavens I can start using these pieces now – so they can become a part of Cinnesias now instead of getting them in tech week.
September 26, 2007

Russian voice is no longer gruff sounding. I have succeeded in my round and fuller sound. I was able to have a short sit down with Eric after rehearsal and he gave me some very helpful insights for future progression with Cinnesias. I need to alter my vocal more dynamically – right now I am still coming across as yelling – I need to be more aware of the composition of the scene. I believe my yelling is derived out of the physical intensity of the scene – I will have to work harder at controlling my body. My blending of classic gestures and angst are working effectively for comedic effect – I have succeeded in creating polarity. Currently my seducing of Myrrhine is overriding my desire to have sex – I need to raise the stakes of my objective. Overall I need to play the urgency of the scene more – I believe Eric is trying to convey to me that I need to tighten up my tempo.

September 27, 2007

Run through today and I got thrown off during the prologue because I inverted a line. This caused me to get off focus, but I was able to reign my self back in half though my opening monologue. I noticed black chalk all over my hands tonight and discovered that it’s from the charcoal outline for the statues that still need to be painted. This caused me to be taken out of my scene with Myrrhine tonight because I was more concerned with not wanting to get the black gunk on my hands all over my costume. At notes tonight Eric pointed out that I began to slip back into a growl in my prologue monologue – I can’t hear myself doing it so I will need to record myself and listen for it. Then I can correct it.
**September 28, 2007**

Tonight the head of my puppet child fell off. Chris and I both heard it snap and it caused us to panic slightly. We were able to recover instantly and continue with the scene. Prologue voice worked tonight – less growly.

**September 29, 2007**

Today the show was in top form – despite the grueling 11 AM to 10 PM tech. Myrrhine poured an abundance of water in my ear when she pours the cod liver oil on my face. I couldn’t hear for the rest of the scene – we will have to work out this bit so I don’t go deaf every night.

**October 1, 2007**

Run through tonight with costumes. My wig fell off tonight because I didn’t have it pinned securely enough – I will remedy this for tomorrow. Thankfully I have had the opportunity to work with almost my entire costume through the rehearsal process. So tonight’s run through wasn’t an obstacle for me because I’ve been using my costume for weeks now. Thankfully Eric and the sound designer have added sound effects to me kicking and hitting Manes, my son. For the longest time I thought the broad kicks and hits I was engaging in were not effective – however, with the sound effects the cartoon qualities of Cinnesias have become more realized. Tonight I hit my wrist on the stairs of the set as I fell for Myrrhine at the very end of the scene. I will need to be more careful of this from now on.

**October 2, 2007**

Another run through tonight. The power went out earlier in the day and it wasn’t expected to be turned back on time for our rehearsal. However as Bill, Nicole, and I...
October 2 continued

retuned from our dinner all the lights were back on. Since we were all told there was a 90% chance tonight’s rehearsal was going to be canceled – my mind was already at home. Well it’s A Game time baby – I had to get back in performance mode very quickly. My wig stayed secured to my head but as I progressed though my scene it began to pull from my forehead – exposing my real hair. The wig is too small for my head, I will notify costumes tonight and see if they can fix it for tomorrow. I didn’t re-injure my wrist tonight – I will need to be in full control from this point forward. Since we are now using water on the set – the chance of me slipping and seriously injuring myself is very high.

October 3, 2007

Eric added a new statue hump for me at the end of my scene. I now need to climb the tower and hump the statue from up in the air. I just need to be careful as I climb because during this part of the scene my energy is very high and I don’t want to slip because of all the water on the stage.

October 5, 2007: OPENING NIGHT

Great show tonight – the audience was amazing. Like always though here at Kent State – we are always spoiled the first night because everyone’s friends come out to support everybody. Tomorrow’s show will be the real test and we will see what really gets the audience laughing. So we have to keep the energy up!

October 6, 2007

New problems with Myrrhine arose tonight – throughout this entire process Myrrhine has performed with a lack of commitment and energy, but tonight she performed with barely
October 6 continued

any at all. I could barely hear her on stage once again and she was merely going through the motions. I find it extremely disheartening to hear her talk to fellow cast members just moments before she goes on stage about the parties after the show. We need to be focusing on our scene and the show at hand – not our activities after the performance.

October 14, 2007

Myrrhine was out of control today. When she first appeared from atop the citadel she began to drop lines and invent new ones that had no relevance to our scene. Then before she was supposed to scale down the citadel she disappeared below the scenic piece – leaving Chris and I on stage with the scene barely started. Thankfully she remerged after I called for her once again – but we didn’t get the scene back on track until after she hits me with her but and I beg for her to lie with my at the fountain. Even though we got the lines back on track – she was still barely loud enough to be heard onstage and was merely going through the motions with her blocking and the comedic bits. Thankfully I amassed an overabundance of qualities when I created my score. This way I was able to stay engaged in the scene no matter what Myrrhine did.
# APPENDIX C

## VERSHININ SCORE

### ACT 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LINE</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>QUALITY</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBJ: To be accepted.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cue:</strong> Lieutenant Colonel Vershinin!</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you do! I’m delighted to be here at last. How you’ve grown.</td>
<td>To Greet</td>
<td>Commandingly</td>
<td>A = Fear, AT = Soldier, PG = Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m delighted! But there’s three of you isn’t there? I remember three sisters, three girls…I don’t recall you faces, but I remember perfectly: three girls. I saw you with my own eyes. How time does fly!</td>
<td>To Thank</td>
<td>Sincerely</td>
<td>PG = Pull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To Solve</td>
<td>Inquisitively</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cue:</strong> Moscow! You’re from Moscow?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes indeed. I was an officer in your father’s command. Now your face I think I remember…</td>
<td>To Confirm</td>
<td>Commandingly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To Discover</td>
<td>Questioningly</td>
<td>PG = Pull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cue:</strong> ... Vershinin is from Moscow.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You must be Olga Sergeyevna, the oldest. And you are Maria…And you are Irina, the youngest…</td>
<td>To Discover</td>
<td>Playfully</td>
<td>PG = Embrace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cue:</strong> You’re from Moscow?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Yes. I went to school in Moscow and began my service career there – served there quite a while, and I’ve finally gotten my own command – here. Three sisters.

I remember your father very well, when I close my eyes I can see him as if it were yesterday. I used to spend a lot of time at your house in Moscow…

*Cue: I thought I remembered everybody, but…*

Perhaps you remember my full name – Alexander Ignatych…

*Cue: ...and they used to tease you about being a major…*

That’s right. The love-sick major.

*Cue: ...Oh, you’ve gotten old...so old!*

Yes, when they called me the love-sick major I was young and in love. Now I’m not.

*Cue: ...but you’re not really...old.*

Well… How long has it been since you’ve left Moscow?

*Cue: ...What street did you live on?*

On old Basmany Street.
**Cue: So did we.**

Then for a while I liven on Nemetsky Street. I used to walk from there to the barracks. You have to cross a big bridge to get there, the water makes a sound underneath. If you’re lonely it makes you feel awful. The river you got here is wonderful! Wide, strong…

**Cue: ...There are mosquitoes...**

Oh come now, this is a very good climate, very healthy, Russian. And you’ve got birch trees. Wonderful, uncomplicated birch trees. My favorite tree. Life here must be very good. But it’s funny, the nearest railroad station is eighteen miles away. And nobody seems to know why.

**Cue: Now I remember you.**

I knew your mother.

**Cue: ...No one will remember us.**

**OBJ: To amaze with my intelligence**

True. No one will remember us. That’s fate nothing we can do about it. Things that seem important to us, serious and significant things – the time will come when they’ll all be

| To Enlighten | Simply | A = Ease  
PG = Open |
| To Chastise | Coldly | PG = Strike |
| To Recover | Playfully | PG = Lift |
| To Challenge | Playfully | AT = Visionary  
PG = Lift |
| To Enlighten | Fondly |
| To Complain | Exasperatedly | PG = Strike |
| To Cement | Pointedly | AT = Soldier  
PG = Embrace |
| To Rescue | Brightly | PG = Lift  
AT = Professor |
| To Teach | Sincerely | PG = Open |
forgotten – or they won’t seem important anymore. The interesting thing, there is no way we can guess what will be considered important serious. Remember the discoveries of Copernicus and Columbus, how they seemed silly and unnecessary at first, while a lot of nonsense was propounded as eternal truth? So in time perhaps this life, the one we’re so proud of, will seem strange, messy, even sinful…

*Cue:* ...*society has attained a certain moral elevation…*

Yes, yes, of course.

*Cue:* *This is my brother, Andrei Sergeyich.*

Vershinin

*Cue:* ...*now my sisters won’t leave you alone.*

I think I’ve already managed to bore your sisters.

*Cue:* ...*He made it himself.*

It certainly is…

*Cue:* ...*We all used to call Alexander Ignatykh the lovesick major, and he never got mad.*

Never!

*Cue:* ...*I want to translate this book from the English…*
You read English?

_Cue: ...We know a lot that’s unnecessary._

**OBJ: To defend my beliefs.**

You know a lot that’s unnecessary! I don’t think there exists – I don’t think there could exist – a town so dull and boring that it didn’t have a real need for intelligent, educated people. All right, let’s agree this town is backward and vulgar, and let’s suppose that out of all its inhabitants there are only three people like you. You won’t be able to overcome the unenlightened mass that surrounds you, like will swallow you up. But you won’t disappear, you will have influence. And after you’ve gone there will be six more, like you, then twelve, until finally people like you will be the majority. In two or three hundred years of life on earth will be unimaginably beautiful – man needs a life like that, and if we don’t have it yet we must dream of it and that’s the reason we must be able to see and know more than our fathers and grandfathers. And you complain that you know a lot that’s unnecessary!

_Cue: ...We have to work..._

**OBJ: To seduce Masha.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Inquire</th>
<th>Excitedly</th>
<th>PG = Pull</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| To Admonish | Firmly | A = Shock  
| PG = Strike |
| To Put At Ease | Calmly | A = Embarrassment  
| PG = Open |
| To Enlighten | Passionately | A = Joy  
| PG = Pull |
| To Inspire | Brightly | PG = Lift |
| To Cement | Chidingly | A = Passion  
| AT = Soldier  
| PG = Strike |
Yes.
What a lot of flowers you’ve got! And a beautiful house. All my life I’ve lived in dumpy apartments. And the one thing I’ve always wanted was a lot of flowers like this…Oh, my!

_Cue: ...And my father was baptized in the Russian church._

Sometimes I think what it would be like to start life all over again. The life we’d already lived would be a kind of rough draft, and the new one would be a clean copy! I think each of us would try not to repeat the same mistakes. I have a wife, and two little girls, my wife is not a well woman, and what with one thing and another, if I could start life all over again, I wouldn’t get married.

_Cue: ...Read it some time when you have nothing better to do._

_OBJ: To be invited to stay._

Thank you. I’m really delighted we’ve gotten to know each other again…

_Cue: Do, please!_

I seem to have intruded on a birthday party. I didn’t know, I should have congratulated you…

| To Silence | Firmly | PG = Strike |
| To Flatter | Sincerely | PG = Open |
| To Flirt | Coyly | AT = Don Juan |
| To Imagine | Sweetly | AT = Visionary |
| To Play Off | Sheepishly | PG = Pull |
| To Illuminate | Sternly | AT = Soldier |
| To Play Off | Lovingly | PG = Open |
| To Play Off | Sheepishly | A = Frustration |
| To Play Off | Coldly | PG = Close |
| To Announce | Sincerely | PG = Embrace |
| To Apologize | Embarrassedly | A = Embarrassment |
| To Apologize | | PG = Wring |
**Cue: ...She’s a wonderful woman.**

I’ll have a little of this dark vodka… You’re health! I feel very much a home here.

**Cue: You get an F-minus in conduct.**

This vodka is delicious. What gives it that special taste?

**Cue: ...I hope you’ll all be able to come for dinner.**

I hope you’ll let me come too.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Announce</th>
<th>Matter Of Factly</th>
<th>Heartily</th>
<th>Warmly</th>
<th>PG = Open</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To Rescue</td>
<td>Uncomfortably</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A = Awkward PG = Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Inquire</td>
<td>Playfully</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A = Joy PG = Pull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT 2</td>
<td>LINE</td>
<td>ACTION</td>
<td>QUALITY</td>
<td>OTHER</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cue: ...the best brought up and the best educated people are in the military.</td>
<td>To Announce</td>
<td>Matter Of Factly</td>
<td>AT = Don Juan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OBJ: To get a kiss from Masha.</td>
<td>To Seduce</td>
<td>Burningly</td>
<td>A = Lust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I’m really thirsty. I’d love a cup of tea.</td>
<td>To Control</td>
<td>Commandingly</td>
<td>AT = Soldier</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PG = Strike</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cue: ...Now I’ve changed my mind. Unfortunately.</td>
<td>To Joke</td>
<td>Sincerely</td>
<td>PG = Strike</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pompously</td>
<td>PG = Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes. Well…</td>
<td>To Challenge</td>
<td>Playfully</td>
<td>AT = Don Juan</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PG = Pull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cue: ...my husband’s colleagues from the high school it makes me sick.</td>
<td>To Challenge</td>
<td>Playfully</td>
<td>AT = Don Juan</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PG = Pull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I don’t see that much difference, between military and civilians – in this town at least. They both seem uninteresting. They’re all alike! Listen to any of the locals who claim to be sensitive or intelligent – civilian or military. His wife depresses him, his house depresses him. We are all supposed to be such highly developed abstract thinkers, but why are our lives so depressing? Why?</td>
<td>To Provoke</td>
<td>Depressingly</td>
<td>PG = Push</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cue: Why?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PG = Push</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why does his wife depress him? And his children? And why do they get depressed by him?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PG = Push</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cue: You’re a bit depressed yourself today.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OBJ: To make Masha jealous.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Maybe. I haven’t eaten a thing since this morning.
My daughter wasn’t feeling well and whenever something is the matter with my two little girls I always get upset, it kills me to think of the mother they’ve got. God, you should have seen her this morning! What a fool she is! We started fighting at seven this morning, and at nine I slammed the door and left. I never talk about these things. Funny, you’re the only one I complain to about it.
Don’t be angry with me. You’re absolutely all I’ve got.
You’re a strange, wonderful woman. I can see your eyes shining in the dark.

*Cue: There’s more light over here.*

**OBJ:** To get a kiss from Masha.

I love you, I love you, I love your eyes, the way you move, I dream about you...You strange wonderful woman!

*Cue: Why are you so quiet, Alexander Ignatyich?*

**OBJ:** To fool Irina and the Baron.

I don’t know. I want some tea! My kingdom for a cup of tea! I haven’t eaten a thing since this morning…

*Cue: I can’t live without you.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To Tease</td>
<td>Burningly</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>To Agitate</td>
<td>Snidely</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Apologize</td>
<td>Fearfully</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Confess</td>
<td>Wonderingly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Exclaim</td>
<td>Exasperatedly</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>To Yearn</td>
<td>Coyly</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*A = Lust*  
*PG = Pull*  
*A = Frustration*  
*PG = Strike*  
*A = Fear*  
*PG = Wring*  
*AT = Soldier*  
*A = Fear*  
*PG = Wring*  
*PG = Pull*
**OBJ: To win a debate with the Baron.**

Now what?
If we’re not going to have tea, let’s talk.

*Cue: All right, let’s do. About what?*

Let’s make up things. For instance, let’s talk about what life will be like in two hundred or three hundred years.

*Cue: ...people will still go around complaining and they will still be afraid to die, the same as they are now.*

No! I believe that everything in the world will change; it’s already changing right before our eyes.
In two or three hundred years, well a thousand maybe, a new and happier life will begin.
We’ll never see it, but we are working towards it right now.
We work for it, we suffer for it, we create it, in fact. And that’s the whole point of our existence. That’s what happiness is I think.

*Cue: ...I’ve been laughing all day long.*

I graduated from the same school you did, even though I never went to the Academy; I read a lot, but I’m not very good at choosing book, sometimes I think I’m reading all the wrong things.
Still, the longer I live the more I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Exclaim</th>
<th>Exasperatedly Pointedly</th>
<th>PG = Strike</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To Challenge</td>
<td>Playfully</td>
<td>PG = Pull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Reason</td>
<td>Firmly</td>
<td>A = Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Playfully</td>
<td>PG = Strike</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brightly</td>
<td>PG = Strike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Burningly</td>
<td>A = Lust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passionately</td>
<td>PG = Lift</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Firmly</td>
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<tr>
<td>To Lay Out</td>
<td>Sarcastically</td>
<td>PG = Strike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Burningly</td>
<td>AT = Don Juan</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>PG = Pull</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A = Lust</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
want to know,
and I know so little,
but I do think I know the most
important thing. And I want to
convince you of it, too. That
happiness doesn’t exist as yet, it
will never exist for us. Our task
is only to work; happiness is
reserved for our descendents.
It’s not for me.

*Cue: …But what if I’m happy
already?*

You’re not.

*Cue: …Either you know the
reason why you’re alive, or
nothing makes any difference.*

*OBJ: To seduce Masha.*

Still, it’s too bad youth doesn’t
last…

*Cue: Do you want me to show
you another way to play
solitaire?*

Listen to that wind!

*Cue: If I lived in Moscow I
wouldn’t care what the weather
was.*

The other day I was reading the
diary of that French politician,
the one who went to prison
because of the Panama scandal.
It was so moving the way he
described the birds he could see
from his prison window, birds
he never noticed when he was a
government official.
Of course now that he’s out of
prison he probably doesn’t

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>To Drive Home</td>
<td>Pointedly</td>
<td>AT = Soldier</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>PG = Strike</td>
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<td>To Cement</td>
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<td>To Yearn</td>
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<tr>
<td>To Flirt</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PG = Pull</td>
<td>AT = Professor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Passionately</td>
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<tr>
<td>To Illuminate</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Playfully</td>
<td>PG = Open</td>
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</table>
notice them anymore. Same with you: once you’re actually living in Moscow you won’t notice it anymore either. We’re never happy, we can never be happy. We only want to be happy.

*Cue: Somebody brought a note for you, dear.*

**OBJ:** To escape without angering Masha.

For me? It’s from my daughter. Oh, God, wouldn’t you know… Excuse me, Maria Sergeyevna, I have to go. I’ll just lip out quietly. It’s the same old story.

*Cue: What’s the matter?*

My wife has taken too many pills again. It’s all very unpleasant. My dearest, you wonderful woman…

*Cue: ...And they said they were having a party.*

**OBJ:** To get Masha to leave with me.

I only left an hour ago, and they were waiting for the carnival people.

*Cue: Even I got tired at the meeting.*

**OBJ:** To get more information on Masha from Feyodor.

My wife tried to kill herself again, but she was just trying to

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<td>To Lay Out</td>
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<td>To Discover</td>
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<td>A = Fear</td>
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<tr>
<td>To Illuminate</td>
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<td>To Apologize</td>
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<td>PG = Embrace</td>
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<tr>
<td>To Enlighten</td>
<td>Matter Of Factly</td>
<td>A = Fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Enlighten</td>
<td>Coldly</td>
<td>PG = Close</td>
</tr>
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</table>
throw a scare into me. She’s out of danger now. I suppose that means we should go.
I wish you all a very good night.
Fyodor Illych, let’s go out somewhere!
I really can’t go home right now.

*Cue: ...Accusative of exclamation.*

All right, I’ll go by myself.
| ACT 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **LINE** | **ACTION** | **QUALITY** | **OTHER** |
| *Cue: Come in and sit down.* | | | |
| **OBJ: To run away with Masha.** | | | |
| If it weren’t for the troops the whole town would have burned! Good boys! Just terrific! | To Exclaim | Proudly | AT = Soldier  
A = Fear  
PG = Open |
| *Cue: ...I suppose it’s really his business, but still—if you want I could probably have a talk with him.* | | | |
| **OBJ: To put Feyodor in his place.** | | | |
| I’m a mess. I got terribly dirty in the fire. I heard a rumor the other day, something about our brigade being transferred. Maybe in Poland, nobody knows. | To Exclaim | Exasperatedly | PG = Push  
To Lay Out | Pointedly | PG = Strike  
Pointedly | PG = Open |
| *Cue: ...”Don’t you like this little fig I’m giving you…”* | | | |
| **OBJ: To be comforted.** | | | |
| Well…This is all really very strange. When the fire first started I ran right home; as soon as I go there I realized our house was safe, but my two girls were standing in the doorway, all they had on was their underwear, their mother was gone, people running everywhere, and on those little girl’s faces was a look of horror, it wrung my heart to see them like that. My God, I thought, what will those little girls have to go through during their lifetime! | To Elevate | Uneasily | PG = Open  
To Lay Out | Pointedly | A = Patriarch  
Angrily | PG = Wring  
Fearfully |
I picked them up and brought them here, but all I could think of was what they would have to go through before they die. And when I got here, I found their mother angry screaming. And when my little girls were standing there in their underwear, with no shoes on, and the street was all red from fire, I thought: this is the way things used to happen years ago—a surprise enemy attack, arson and looting… And yet of course there’s really an enormous difference between now and then, isn’t there? And after a little time goes by, say, two or three hundred years, people will look back at our life with horror. Excuse me, I’m talking too much again. You’re all asleep.

*OBJ: To get Masha to kiss me.*

Well I’ll keep talking anyway. I’m in the strangest mood today. I feel an urge to live, to do something wild. *Lyubov vse vorasty pokorny, yeyo poryvy blagotvorny…*

*Cue: Tram-tam-tam…*

*Tram-tam…*  
*Cue: Tra-ra-ra?*

*Tra-ta-ta.*  
*Cue: How come the Baron can stay and I can’t?*

*OBJ: To break up the fight.*
We should all go. How’s the fire?

*Cue: *...*Now I find it extremely funny, that the Baron can come in here and I can’t.*

Tram-tam-tam.

*Cue: *...*I just want to know calmly what it is you all have against me.*

**OBJ: To get Masha to leave with me.**

Tram-tam-tam.

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<th>Action</th>
<th>Command</th>
<th>Note</th>
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<td>To Order</td>
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<td>A = Joy</td>
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<td>To Request</td>
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<td>To Invite</td>
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<td>ACT 4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LINE</strong></td>
<td><strong>ACTION</strong></td>
<td><strong>QUALITY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cue:</strong> ...I’m the happiest woman in the world!</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBJ:</strong> To end my relationship with Masha.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olga Sergeyevna, we’re leaving right away. I have to go. I wish you all the best, the very best…</td>
<td>To Announce</td>
<td>Commandingly</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sincerely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where’s Maria Sergeyevna?</td>
<td>To Inquire</td>
<td>Pointedly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cue:</strong> She’s in the garden somewhere. I’ll go find her.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please. I have to hurry.</td>
<td>To Encourage</td>
<td>Quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cue:</strong> I’ll go look too. Masha! Yoo-hoo!</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBJ:</strong> To be comforted.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Well, everything comes to an end. Now it’s time to say goodbye. The town gives us a sort of farewell lunch, the mayor made a speech, I ate and listened, but my heart was here, I kept thinking…I’m going to miss this place.</td>
<td>To Announce</td>
<td>Playfully</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Matter of Factly</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To Reflect</td>
<td>Sadly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cue:</strong> Do you think we’ll ever see each other again?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Probably not. My wife and my two girls will stay on another month or so; if they need any help, do you think you could…</td>
<td>To Lay Out</td>
<td>Matter of Factly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To Request</td>
<td>Sincerely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cue:</strong> …And I’ll never get to Moscow…</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Thank you for everything. Forgive me if things were…
I talked too much, don’t think badly of me.

*Cue: Why doesn’t Masha hurry up…*

Life isn’t easy. Sometimes it must seem stupid and hopeless, but we have to remember that it is getting constantly brighter, and better, and I don’t think the time is far off when it will be completely bright. I really have to go.
Mankind is passionately seeking something, and eventually, we’ll find it. We must find a way to join love of work to a love of higher things.
Well, now I must go…

*Cue: Here she comes.*

**OBJ: To end my relationship with Masha.**

I came to say goodbye…

*Cue: Now, now, that’s enough…*

Write me…Let me go, I’ve got to go… Olga Sergeyevna, take her, I’ve got to go…
I’m late…

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<td>To Yield</td>
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<tr>
<td>To Inspire</td>
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<td>To Announce</td>
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<td>To Inspire</td>
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<td>To Hold My Ground</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Firmly</td>
<td>A = Soldier</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Apologetically</td>
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